

High Sports

Spring Term | March 2022



Once again the Sports department has seen a record number of pupils attending a huge variety of extracurricular clubs, with one evening boasting over 80 attendees across 8 year groups, taking part in sports such as Tennis, Netball, Cricket and Fitness.

After what can only be described as a decimated two years of sporting activity and fixtures, it is heartwarming to see so many individuals taking up the opportunities on offer and really embracing the return to the sporting norm.

This term has proved to be tricky not just in terms of the high calibre of opposition we play but, with the additional element not taken into consideration, also the weather. Many more netball goals may have been scored were it not for the blasts of wind that sent the ball onto a new trajectory and icy conditions leading to altering practice sessions.

Resilience is the key word and that has certainly been shown along with determination and adaptability by everyone.

Mrs Littlewood & Miss Fraser
Acting Directors of Sport

Condover Hall Festival of Netball: 4 March



On 4 March, 27 Year 6 and 8 students travelled to Condover Hall, Shrewsbury for the GDST Festival of Netball weekend. It was the first trip in two years and certainly proved to be a memorable return to touring!

Condover Hall is an activity centre in Shropshire that offers an organised netball tournament as well as adventurous activities on site. All teams playing are from GDST schools, and it is an ideal opportunity for girls to establish friendships with other GDST pupils and hopefully they will continue to meet in years to come at sporting rallies.

It was a jam-packed weekend! On the Friday night, and Saturday and Sunday mornings the team were able to take part in climbing, low

and high rope courses, abseiling, archery, laser maze and laser tag before they played in the first part of the netball tournament. The High School played against some very tough teams in the first draw on the Saturday morning with the Northampton Sky Blue team qualifying for the cup competition and the Northampton Navy team qualifying for the plate competition on Sunday.

Both teams did extremely well and fought hard against strong opposition.

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Cross Country

We were delighted to compete in the Cross Country Championships held at Abington Park. Bella F, Lucy H and Lily G represented the South Northants team and finished with respectable times.



Ella ran despite being ill and came in 7th, a highly commendable effort, and she qualified for the Anglian Trophy Meeting held in February. Ella was also selected to represent Northamptonshire at the English Schools National Cross Country Championships held on the 19 March. This event is one of the main events on the calendar where the top athletes in each of the 46 counties in England competed for the honour of being the best in the country.

Athletics



On the first weekend of the half term holiday, the U15 England Indoor Age Group Championships were held in Sheffield. We are delighted to share with you that the Girls' 300m title went to our very own Ella D.

Netball

As mentioned in the introduction, the weather really did make an impact for the term. Fixtures started in a 'flurry' and we 'blustered' through numerous matches during the course of the term.

Saturdays saw block fixtures running at full capacity with 6 teams at Home and 6 teams travelling Away, and midweek matches with at least three teams playing. Schools we played include Princethorpe, Pitsford, Akeley Wood, Wellingborough, Ratcliffe and Kings High.



Ella represents Rugby and Northampton Athletics Club and through sheer grit, determination, hard work and perseverance has been rewarded with this title. We are so proud of you, Ella!

If Ella has inspired you to take up Athletics or Cross Country, please take a look at the boards in the Sports department with information about your closest club.

Swimming



There were a number of fantastic performances in the pool during the term. At the County Championships, Tanya C gained a Silver medal in the 50m Back and 4th in the 100m Back. Poppy B won a Gold in the Medley Relay.

The U12 team travelled to Warwick School for the Warwick 50's. The squad all performed well and they attained 3rd in the Back and Free races overall out of 10 competing schools.

Tennis

Over the winter and spring terms we have been fortunate to have experienced coaches from Dallington Tennis Club working with the Junior and Senior students. These sessions have been valuable preparation for the summer term, when we will be preparing for the various GDST rallies and school fixtures we have scheduled.

As the summer term begins there will be Tennis extracurricular clubs on offer and open to all abilities. Information and contact details for local tennis clubs in your area are displayed in the Sports department.

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Hockey

Ruby CF & Harriet F were nominated by their hockey club, Northampton Saints, for regional trials. It was a four-week trial process, where each trial was 2 hours long.

A rigorous selection process followed where an initial long squad was trimmed to a short squad of 20. Both Harriet and Ruby were selected for the U15 South Midlands Performance Centre for England Hockey. As part of this, they have been training regularly and are now over halfway through



their sessions. The squad is building up to the PC Challenge Cup in July.

This is an awesome achievement for them both and testament to their hard work, dedication and hours of training that go into their sport. Good luck to Harriet and Ruby at the PC Challenge Cup.

Equestrian

Although there has not been much competing for the team this term we have had major successes in County Championships. The 90cm Showjumping team of Eloise, Nancy and Izzy competed in the county SJ at Bury Farm in January.

Well done to Eloise, placing 2nd individually and County Champion in the 90cm, and the team of Eloise, Izzy and Nancy who took team 2nd and County Champions in the same class. This qualified us for the National Finals at Hickstead in May.

Cricket in the Curriculum



The thwack of leather on willow heralds the start of the summer for many and this is certainly will be the case at the High School, as we embark on the transition from windball to hardball for some year groups. The transition from rounders to cricket was difficult initially; now the students at school are converted to the game. The transition to full hardball cricket is the next step.

Cricket has seen a steady growth in popularity in females. This has been helped along by the successes of the Women's national team, winning the Cricket World Cup in 2017 (now looking to retain the title this summer in New Zealand) and the hybrid 100 format of the game. Audiences have seen how captivating the game can be.

In school curriculum time all years experience cricket in their Games lessons and matches help to implement skills learnt. We have been very fortunate to have Nick Baker running pre-season Cricket sessions with the Senior years and he will be joining the groups for curriculum Games times after Easter. There is an extensive programme of introductory sessions to cricket run by the ECB

from grassroots up to elite talent pathways. All Stars Cricket provides a fantastic first experience for all children aged 5 to 8 years old; Dynamos Cricket is the next step on for those aged 8 to 11, focusing on developing fundamental movement skills.

Details of the closest local clubs for children aged 11 and upwards can be found by contacting the local Women's and Girl's Cricket Development Officers:

Northamptonshire - Jo Gardner
jo.gardner@nccc.co.uk

Bedfordshire - Damianne Redpath
damianne.redpath@cricketeast.co.uk

Buckinghamshire - Hannah Mansell
hannah.mansell@bucksclub.org

Spotlight on Sport: Hattie



Hattie's hockey has been excellent this season - and she has shown great progression at her club, Northampton, and for the county, where she has represented Northants at U15 level, playing up an age group.

Hattie was invited to go to the England Hockey Performance Centre training at Rugby School earlier in the season which was intense, but ultimately has helped her game and confidence. She is a fixture in the Senior Ladies 3's side at Northampton and has been invited to train with the Ladies 2's squad recently - and has made her debut for the L2 side also, of which she was very proud! For context, it's quite rare for 13 year olds to be exposed to that level of hockey but she is in a group of 3 or 4 girls who have been identified by the coaches to 'step up'.

Earlier in March, Hattie was selected by the Northants County Tennis coaches to represent them at a weekend-long U18 tournament, staying away at a

hotel with the team in Shrewsbury. A great opportunity for her and she really enjoyed playing with the older girls. Northants won the tournament, defeating Cumbria, Shropshire, and Channel Islands, where Hattie won all of her singles matches dropping just 4 games, and won one of her two doubles matches!

She has continued to train and play over the winter too, both with the County U14 side and also for her club at Northants County Lawn Tennis Club with some of the senior ladies, and has a current national ranking of 84, which is exceptional.

Spotlight on Sport: Faith



I have always enjoyed ice skating and quite liked the idea of being a figure skater. On a trip to the ice rink in Uttoxeter for my cousin's birthday, I saw a poster for ice hockey lessons and decided I would like to give it a try.

I enrolled on the next course and started in September 2020 in Milton Keynes. I really enjoyed the classes and realised it was much more than figure skating! The lessons were a lot of fun - half was skating skills and half hockey practices. I passed Level 1 after just 6 weeks and then carried on from there.

Once I had completed all 8 levels I was invited for a trial with MK Storm, the junior ice hockey team. Despite being really nervous, I was offered a place on the U14's. I now train on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, games are usually on Saturday.

I also enjoy going to watch the MK Lightning games with my family.